

VZCZCXRO5652
PP RUEHDBU RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHNP RUEHROV RUEHSR
DE RUEHPG #0263/01 1351546
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 151546Z MAY 09
FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1365
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
RUEHCH/AMEMBASSY CHISINAU 0098
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 0047
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 0803
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 0043
RUEHVJ/AMEMBASSY SARAJEVO 0059
RUEHSI/AMEMBASSY TBILISI 0125
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV 0725
RUEHDE/AMCONSUL DUBAI 0021

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PRAGUE 000263

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

EUR/ERA WLUCAS, EUR/CE FOR ATRATENSEK

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/15/2014
TAGS: [EUN](#) [EZ](#) [EG](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [CE](#) [XF](#) [ZJ](#) [XA](#)
SUBJECT: CZECH EU PRESIDENCY: COMMENTS ON UPCOMING MAY GAERC

PRAGUE 00000263 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: Acting POLEC Counselor Michael Dixon for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (SBU) Summary: On May 14 emboff spoke with Magdalena Janesova of the Czech MFA Department of Common Foreign and Security Policy in advance of the May 18-19 EU General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC). Of note were her comments on: the EU's Anti-Piracy efforts, Georgia, the EU-Russia Summit, Moldova, Bosnia, Iran, Israeli-Palestinian Peace, and Sri Lanka. End Summary.

Anti-Piracy Efforts to be Extended

¶2. (SBU) According to Janesova, the EU will announce at the GAERC the extension of the Atalanta mandate through December ¶2010. The discussion at the May GAERC, will thus simply focus on evaluating the mission to date and addressing the limited EU assets available for this mission. She noted that the European Commission (through its "Stability Instrument") has provided just over one million euros to Kenya since Kenya has agreed to assume responsibility for prosecuting captured pirates. Janesova noted that the EU is also in talks with the Seychelles about prosecuting captured pirates. When asked whether the EU member states were contemplating prosecuting pirates in Europe, Janesova noted that this was unlikely now that Kenya had stepped forward to assume this role.

Georgia

¶3. (C) French Foreign Minister Kouchner has sent a letter to his counterparts regarding what to do in Georgia, which like Iran, will be discussed during the restricted luncheon session. The focus will be on strengthening relations with Georgia and they plan to discuss visa facilitation. The idea is to perhaps lower visa fees, shorten the application, and perhaps provide easier access for Georgian students to the EU. The EU FMs will also cover the internal situation, the international presence in Georgia, and the status of the Geneva talks. Janesova expects that given everything that is in train (Geneva talks, OSCE developments, and UNOMIG), it may not be possible to have a thorough discussion, although she fully anticipates Georgia will be on the June GAERC as well.

EU-Russia Summit - an Update on Preparations and Goals

¶4. (SBU) The Czechs are planning that the EU-Russia Summit discussion at the GAERC will be mostly a technical update on summit negotiations. With respect to Czech goals for the Summit, these fall into four areas. First, the Czechs hope that this summit will help restore confidence in the EU-Russia relationship, which has been badly shaken by Russian actions in Georgia and during the gas crisis. Second, they plan to "take stock" of where things stand with PCA negotiations. Third, they will discuss regional problems (such as Georgia and Moldova). Fourth, they plan to discuss coordination on global issues (such as the financial crisis and climate change). Janesova noted that as agreed early in the Czech EU Presidency, Czech President Vaclav Klaus will lead the Czech delegation, which will include Czech FM Jan Kohout and Czech European Correspondent Vaclav Balek.

Moldova - Dropped

¶5. (C) Moldova has been dropped from the GAERC agenda. According to Janesova, the Romanians pressed hard (apparently the pressure came from the President's office) to add Moldova to the agenda. The Czechs, however, have pressed back that the GAERC is not the appropriate place for Romania to air bilateral issues. (Note: Apparently Romania wanted to discuss the issue of Moldovan visas and Romanian passports. End Note.)

Bosnia - ALTHEA to Stay the Same for Now

PRAGUE 00000263 002 OF 002

¶6. (SBU) Acknowledging that the EU would like to see Bosnia stand on its own two feet soon, she did note that the EU does not want or plan to reconfigure EUFOR ALTHEA at the moment. While some member state want to scale back the mission, Janesova commented that the idea of going to a 200-person training mission is perhaps something to consider far into the future. She emphasized that the EU plans to keep things as they are, at the very least until the Office of the High Representative closes.

Israeli-Palestinian Peace

¶7. (C) Janesova stated that the EU shares a similar perspective to the U.S. on Israeli-Palestinian peace and the need to uphold the Quartet principles. She did note, however, that certain EU member states (and here she cited France, Ireland and Belgium) continue to raise the idea of engaging directly with Hamas. The EU consensus remains, however, in support of the Quartet principles.

Strategic Discussion of Iran

¶8. (SBU) The EU plans to have a strategic discussion of Iran during the restricted luncheon session. Janesova noted that the EU is trying to be careful not to send mixed signals to Iran. With respect to our point encouraging the EU to tighten sanctions, she noted that while the Czechs may be "hawks" on this issue, it is not easy to achieve consensus within the EU. She pointed to the EU's "Southern Flank" as having a different philosophical approach to the efficacy of sanctions (Portugal and Cyprus for example) and that certain countries with economic interests in Iran resist pressure to tighten sanctions (here she mentioned Austria, Sweden, and Italy). With respect to the recent release of Roxana Saberi, Janesova noted that the EU was pleased with the decision, although she noted that the EU has also raised the Durabi case with Iran, which unfortunately ended with her execution.

Sri Lanka

¶9. (SBU) Janesova noted that the Brits and French pressed to have Sri Lanka added to the agenda of the GAERC. The discussion will primarily focus on a readout of the EU mission to Sri Lanka led by DFM Helena Bambasova earlier this week.

Thompson-Jones